

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SS-15 NSC-05 EB-07 L-02 SP-02

PM-03 ACDA-05 INR-07 /059 W
----- 128385

P R 211709Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3956

INFO USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 4526

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, BE

SUBJECT: BELGIAN PROPOSAL ON AN INTEGRATED EUROPEAN ARMS IND-
USTRY

REF: A. BRUSSELS 4486 B. OLSEN-MANGER TELCON

1. SUPPLEMENTING REF A RUNDOWN OF TOPICS WHICH WILL
INTEREST TINDEMANS IN MEETING WITH PRESIDENT, WE CALL
YOUR ATTENTION HERewith TO BELGIAN PROPOSAL MADE MAY 20
AT WEU MINISTERIAL MEETING IN LONDON WHEREIN TINDEMANS'
CURRENT THINKING ON INTEGRATED ARMAMENTS INDUSTRY
AND SO-CALLED EUROPEAN PREFERENCE WERE SET FORTH IN
SOME DETAIL. TINDEMANS MAY WELL
DEVELOP THIS LINE OF THOUGHT IN MEETING WITH PRESIDENT
AND SECRETARY.

2. AT LONDON WEU MEETING FORNMINISTER VAN ELSLANDE,
WHO WAS ELECTED CHAIRMAN OF WEU MINISTERIAL GROUP VICE
CALLAGHAN, PROPOSED THAT WEU SET UP AT ONCE AN AD HOC
GROUP "TO ASSEMBLE AND COLLATE THE ECONOMIC AND
TECHNICAL DATA REGARDING THE INTEGRATION OF THE
EUROPEAN DEFENSE INDUSTRY." VAN ELSLANDE PROPOSED
THIS AS FIRST STEP IN A PROCESS WHICH WOULD CULMINATE
IN FORMATION OF A EUROPEAN ARMAMENTS AGENCY. WEU
MINISTERIAL COUNCIL DID NOT ACT ON BELGIAN PROPOSAL
TO SET UP AD HOC GROUP BUT DID AGREE TO STUDY THE
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VAN ELSLANDE PAPER. AN OUTLINE OF THAT PAPER, MADE

AVAILABLE BY FORNMINISTRY HERE, IS SUMMARIZED AS
FOLLOWS.

3. STANDARDIZATION OF ARMAMENTS BY THE ATLANTIC ALLIES
IS AN URGENT NECESSITY, AS IS THE MAINTENANCE OF "A
VIABLE AND COMPETITIVE ARMAMENTS INDUSTRY" IN EUROPE.
ARMS STANDARDIZATION MAKES SENSE ONLY IN A NATO CONTEXT
AND WITH PARTICIPATION OF ALL EUROPEAN ARMS-PRODUCING
COUNTRIES. THIS RAISES THE QUESTION OF THE MISSION AND
THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE EUROGROUP, SPECIFICALLY FRENCH
MEMBERSHIP. THE EUROGROUP SHOULD ADDRESS ITSELF WITHOUT
DELAY TO CLARIFICATION OF ITS ROLE IN THE WESTERN
DEFENSE EFFORT.

4. EUROPEAN COUNTRIES SHOULD SPECIFICALLY ADDRESS
THEMSELVES TO A EUROPEAN ARMS INDUSTRY IN THE CONTEXT OF
THE CREATION OF A COMMON INDUSTRIAL POLICY FOR EC.
"THE EUROPEAN SOLUTION SHOULD TAKE, WE BELIEVE, THE FORM
OF A EUROPEAN ARMAMENTS AGENCY WHICH WOULD HAVE FOR
ITS MISSION, IN CLOSE LIAISON WITH EC
INSTITUTIONS AND THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE, THE
DEFINITION AND EXECUTION OF A COMMON INDUSTRIAL
POLICY WITH RESPECT TO ARMAMENTS." BELGIUM ENVISIONS
THE COMMON ARMS POLICY FINDING EXPRESSION IN RATIONALIZA-
TION AGREEMENTS BOTH BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS AND BETWEEN
INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES.

5. EUROPE WILL IN ANY CASE CONTINUE TO ACQUIRE AN
IMPORTANT PART OF ITS ARMS FROM THE U.S. EUROPE
MUST NOT CUT ITSELF OFF FROM AMERICAN TECHNOLOGY. IT
SHOULD STRIVE TO CREATE A TWO-WAY TRANSATLANTIC STREET
IN ARMAMENTS WITH TRAFFIC AS NEARLY EVENLY BALANCED
AS POSSIBLE. EUROPE SHOULD ESTABLISH A DIALOGUE WITH
U. . ON THIS MATTER. "BUT FIRST OF ALL ONE MUST DEFINE
A EUROPEAN ARMS PRODUCTION POLICY. ONE MUST ESTABLISH
THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH A "EUROPEAN PREFERENCE"
WOULD COME INTO PLAY." BELGIUM PROPOSES AN AD HOC
GROUP IN WEU, WHICH INCLUDES ALL PRINCIPLE EUROPEAN
ARMS PRODUCERS, TO START THE SPADEWORK. FIRESTONE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COLLECTIVE SECURITY, ARMS PRODUCTION, REGIONAL DEFENSE ORGANIZATIONS, PROPOSALS (BID)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BRUSSE04526
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750178-0631
From: BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750529/aaaaazjr.tel
Line Count: 99
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 BRUSSELS 4486, 75 OLSEN-MANGER
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 APR 2003 by Izenbel0>; APPROVED <04 NOV 2003 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BELGIAN PROPOSAL ON AN INTEGRATED EUROPEAN ARMS IND- USTRY
TAGS: MPOL, BE, XG
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006